

Utsuro no Hako: Interview

Welcome to the 74th issue of "Spot the DENGKEI BUNKO" — where we conduct interviews with various authors under the Dengeki Bunko label. This time, we are interviewing Mikage Eiji, the author of *F-Rank no Boukun 1 - Ochita Tensai no Gaisen* (The F-Ranked Tyrant - Return of a Fallen Genius).

His new series takes place at the renowned private school "Nanahoshi" — also known as the school of the survival of the fittest — where we witness an epic clash of wits as the protagonist works his way toward supreme power. The Nanahoshi school is famous for its incredibly skilled students and its nationally acclaimed achievements in various extracurricular activities. At the very core of this system, however, is a strict ranking system that is used to manage the students and reduces them to collections of numerical ratings of their abilities, from their intelligence to their looks.

This school has an absolute ruler — a girl called Erika Kagurasaka, leader of the "Urban Lion" faction and holder of the title of "Pride." With the perilous ambition of defeating her and ascending to the throne as a tyrant, Kanna Fujishiro starts his quest from the lowest possible rank...

We interviewed Mikage-sensei and had him tell us more about his new series and his quirks while writing. If you like, you can read a few pages [on the details page of his new series](http://dengekibunko.jp/newreleases/978-4-04-891530-4/) (<http://dengekibunko.jp/newreleases/978-4-04-891530-4/>).

Dengeki: What motivated you to write this novel?

Mikage: While writing about a character called Daiya Oomine for my other series, Utsuro no Hako to Zero no Maria, I felt like writing a novel with a smart and overall "cool" protagonist. After I had made a list of several story settings that would allow me to do that, my editor and I went through them and selected the best ones.

Dengeki: Where do you think your new series really shines?

Mikage: The twist and turns in the story that keep betraying the reader's expectations, and the battle of wits in which the protagonist tricks and corners his enemies. Ah, how could I forget: Erika's tea-drenched socks.

Dengeki: What was your greatest challenge during the writing process?

Mikage: I always have trouble judging whether readers may be getting put off because I've taken things too far.

Dengeki: How long did it take you to write this novel?

Mikage: About half a year because I've also been writing Utsuro no Hako to Zero no Maria at the same time.

Dengeki: Please tell us something about the writing process with respect to the protagonist and the heroine.

Mikage: When I actually got down to work, the personalities of the protagonist and the heroine, Nanami, just weren't compatible, forcing me to rewrite their passages over and over. The matter has finally been settled: Nanami is on the losing end of all of their interactions.

Dengeki: Where do you put in some extra effort when writing a novel?

Mikage: The placement of text. I try to make the text easier to read by making important passages stand out.

Dengeki: What do you do when you want to concentrate or come up with fresh ideas?

Mikage: I take a stroll whenever I lose focus.

Dengeki: Was there a piece of work or a person that particularly influenced you when you were in high school?

Mikage: When it comes to writing, I think the movie "Memento" has influenced me a lot.

Dengeki: Which author / piece of work are you currently paying attention to?

Mikage: I'm looking forward to the Dangan Ronpa anime.

Dengeki: What're you addicted to right now?

Mikage: I really love the band "the mirraz."

Dengeki: Is there a game that you are playing intensively at the moment?

Mikage: I plan on getting addicted to Fate/Extra CCC (it's on my backlog).

Dengeki: Finally, do you have a message for your readers?

Mikage: People who love De*th N*te or Ka*ji might also enjoy this series! Enjoy reading about Kanna's "tyrannical" personality!



-“F-Rank no Boukun”

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